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ABSTRACT

Designed to encourage debate, discussion, and, eventually, evaluation of the minimum competency testing movement, this book examines academic, physical, social, aesthetic, and vocational competencies that are basic to the development of the early adolescent. The first of six chapters, Early Adolescent Competencies, raises issues facing schools for early adolescents. Chapter 2, Academic Competency and the Early Adolescent, was prepared by teachers or consultants who work in junior high/middle schools and presents specific competencies to be required of students in language arts, social science, and mathematics. The third chapter, Cultural Competencies for the Early Adolescent, discusses three basic areas of cultural competencies to be developed within the early adolescent: awareness, participation, and appreciation. A brief resume of physical competencies a student should reach by the end of the eighth grade or prior to entering high school is presented in chapter 4. Focusing on social competencies, chapter 5 lists social skills needed by the young adolescent to participate as a responsible and contributing member in a free democratic society. The final chapter reviews (1) the career education curriculum requirements for Illinois, (2) the evolution of career education, (3) vocational development needs of junior high/middle school students, and (4) career development competencies. (LRA)

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Early Adolescent Competencies

1979 STUDY – REPORT

of the

EARLY ADOLESCENT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

(Formerly the Junior High School Association of Illinois)

Edited by

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FOREWORD

The Early Adolescent Education Association of Illinois is pleased to present the 1979 Study-Report: Early Adolescent Competencies. At present 40 states have in operation some form of minimal competency testing. It is predicted that by 1980 all 50 states will be involved in this latest educational innovation, which is an attempt to meet the demands of the public that the schools show evidence of what the students are learning. Since controversy, a necessary action in the democratic process, surrounds all innovation or change, it is the intention of this research to encourage debate, discussion, and, eventually, evaluation of this movement through an examination of academic, physical, social, aesthetic, and vocational competencies that are basic to the development of the early adolescent.

One of the overall endeavors of any educational action is the generation of reflective, evaluative thought processes; therefore, this foreword, although connotative in its future, forward-looking ring, has as its main aim to stimulate a look backwards stressing a historical perspective in early adolescent education. Evaluation is a high-level thinking process. As a model thinker, the educator in the evaluative process tries to make sense out of his world and the world of his students. Evaluation is formed upon the criteria or standards that have been selected, those standards being used as points upon which to reflect as we decide what has taken place. It is the proposition of this writer that the past Study-Report subjects be used as the framework for evaluating the EAEAI's stand on the present issue of minimal competency testing in order that we can truly move "forward" together in our pursuit of truth; that is, the continuity of our past can help us as educators of early adolescents toward wise choices if we will learn our history lesson and not repeat the problems of the past in our present innovations. Before we evaluate, however, we must define and refine the concept of minimal competency testing.

According to the dictionary, "minimal" means the smallest or least quantity assignable, admissible, or possible. "Competence" suggests striving to be qualified; working towards a comfortable existence; developing one's

abilities to the fullest. The word "competence" has the smaller word "compete" as its base, but it is competing with self that is expected. "Testing" can mean anything from a child's attempts to "test" the authority figure to running a race to beat time; however, the journals that describe the Minimum Competency Testing (MCT) movement define testing as a pencil-and-paper test given in the school setting which determines grade-level promotion as well as graduation from high school. The EAEAI board dropped "minimum" from its Study-Report because of its limiting effect. In like manner, the word "testing" is not used in the study since it describes only one type of evaluation.

To refine the concept that the writers in this publication will evaluate, the pros and cons of the movement will act as parameters to the operational definition. Recognizing the fact that all educators feel that a sense of competence is a necessary component of a fully functioning person, there is a great deal of debate surrounding the idea of a component product through the living process of education. For instance, those that support minimal competency testing suggest that it can solve the problem of public concern for a devalued diploma. They say it can make the minority of students that fail to learn, learn better; it can make the minority of teachers that fail to teach basic skills, better able to teach those skills. It promises competent performance in life situations because of minimal achievement in school skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic; and above all, it vows remediation for those who require it.

For those who ride the pendulum in the other direction, there is the prediction that the American education system, heretofore locally controlled, will meet destruction through state and, eventually, federally mandated testing programs. These individuals worry that testing will be unfair to the already downtrodden who do not need another statement of their inadequacy. They see this schema as just another simplistic solution to a diversified needs-neglected educational system. They say tests always look to single answers and, therefore, leave the creative individual in an alienated position. In Galileo's era, the swing of the pendulum became a constant that helped the people of the world become oriented to a fixed longitudinal position. Today,

the metaphorical pendulum swings continuously between continuity and change as the democratic process reflects the extremes of all of us. With reflective, evaluative thought, however, we can find the middle part of the swing which may enable us to orient ourselves to innovations for a better world.

The concept of minimum competency testing has been defined and refined. Now, let's evaluate it. In evaluation, it is necessary to see the good as well as the bad as the mind works to relate the MCT movement to early adolescents and their development. The criteria of any evaluation are linked with the goals that were pursued; therefore, by taking the goals of the EAEAI of past years as a framework, we can give purpose, direction, and continuity to our attempts at educating the youth with whom we have interaction. For instance, in 1970, the association Study-Report was: Students: Top Priority. As you think of the students you know, will this movement give each of them a sense of significance? How will our top priority students be affected by this innovation? Will it enlarge them or belittle them?

In 1974, the association publication stressed Humanizing Instruction in the Junior High School. Will we be moving towards more meaning in our lives via MCT? Are competencies a process or a product methodology? How will the movement affect the climate of the classroom? Will it allow for the development of psycho-motor skills that are so important to the growth of the early adolescent or will it encourage more sit-in-the-seat activities? How will minimal competencies affect the early adolescent's appreciation of the aesthetics? Will it lead the student to success and confidence, to participation and commitment, to health and skills? Will it bring about the development of the whole child; that is, the biological, the psychological, the social, and the spiritual, total human being?

In 1976, the association looked closely at Discipline in the Junior High/ Middle School as its theme. Will stress on competencies take us to a more disciplined outlook in school? Will it lead to self-discipline or other self-controls?

In 1977, we reflected upon our reason for existence in Why the Junior High/Middle School? Its Basic Functions. In this publication was outlined six functions or comprehensive responsibilities that are requisite to early adolescent development. Now the question is: How does the idea of competencies square with our commitment to these six classical functions—exploration, socialization, guidance, articulation, differentiation, and integration? Will this idea give more opportunities to our students to explore, to investigate the world around them? Will minimum competencies afford time for socialization possibilities that will help each individual to move from egocentricity to an appreciation of others? Could it give more time for diagnosis and remediation for all students? Will the problems of transition from the elementary to the high school be solved with the testing movement? Will testing for competencies allow for the differences in size, aptitude, and maturity that are evidenced in the early adolescent? Will it lead to a more departmentalized and categorized learning experience or will the integration of content be its target? And lastly, will competency testing strengthen or weaken the place of the junior high/middle school in the curriculum/organization of public schooling?

Last year, the association Study-Report presented research on Responsibility Education in the Junior High/Middle School. From what was learned, does the establishment of minimal competencies move education in the direction of assuring our nation of a more responsible learner, homemaker, and citizen? Does it provide for ways in which all of us can be accountable? Will we lose the creative leaders of tomorrow by catering, today, to the lowest common denominator as our standard of operation? Will the minorities in our schools be enhanced by the testing movement? Will society gain? American individuality is being tested in these questions.

Although these are just a few of the questions that need to be asked, discussed, and debated, it is well worth the time and effort to think on these things. Read the articles. Sort your thoughts through this historical framework that has been created over the past years. The early adolescent is our heritage as well as our responsibility. Will minimal competencies help us help

the disoriented early adolescent to find reasonable standards? Can we find standards without becoming standardized? Reflect on this, fellow educators. Our influence is exponential to our commitment.

Lydia Hohulin, teacher
Morton Junior High School
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EAEAI Board Member

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AVAILABLE PUBLICATIONS OF THE
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Chapter 1 - EARLY ADOLESCENT COMPETENCIES

by Thomas A. Sinks, Professor of Education
Mankato State University
Mankato, Minnesota

Our public schools are faced with some problems that are perplexing and frustrating: shrinking enrollments, insufficient income to finance budgets that are already cut to the bone, teachers' strikes, empty classrooms, and emptied buildings. What is to be done?

But it has always been thus in our public schools. In the 200 years of our republic, schools have been the center of perplexing and frustrating problems. A decade ago the problems were increasing enrollments, shortages of qualified teachers, and insufficient incomes to finance budgets. When these problems are current, they seem almost insurmountable and lead us to believe that no other age has faced such dire dilemmas. It is good to be reminded that each and every age in human history has viewed its own set of problems as the very worst ever to confront society. Not too long ago the leaders of society viewed many such problems as beyond hope of solution and believed that the destiny of the human race lay in the laps of the gods. Today we must refuse to accept a role as playthings of the gods and work diligently to alleviate, if not eliminate, the current set of school problems. So it is important that all educators and interested citizens work on problems that are current and engender a confidence that solutions and answers are available.

One source of such problems in the public schools for early adolescents is the concern which industry has come to call "quality control." For that matter, American industry is finding its quality controls as troublesome as are the American schools. Witness the many and varied industrial "recalls for adjustments" of recent years. Now education needs to take a look at its own "competencies." The decreasing SAT and ACT (Scholastic Aptitude Test and the American College Test) scores, the number of high school graduates who can't

read, coupled with the steady increase in grade-point averages, are some of the problems growing in scope and number.

Early Adolescence

It was G. Stanley Hall, at the turn of the century, who first identified an adolescent age in the growth and development of children. Hall characterized adolescence as a period of sudden physical growth accompanied by great psychological stress. In the public schools early adolescent pupils range in age from 10 to 14. Since the time of G. Stanley Hall, most school systems have been organized to include three levels of growth and development in three separate types of schools: elementary schools for children, middle schools or junior high schools for early adolescents, and high schools for young adults.

Further, it is important to locate the time period in child growth and development which we will call "early adolescence." The child of 10 years is entering what can be called a preadolescent age and is just leaving late childhood. When the child approaches the age of 13 or 14, he enters adolescence. During this "in-between" period of preadolescence the child experiences pubescence, the point when rapid physical changes begin to take place. The physical changes are accompanied by changes in intellectual functioning, all of which contribute to psychological and social reorientation. The child is beginning to look for a personal identity and to separate himself from his family group. He is very conscious of his bodily changes and believes they are even more apparent to everyone else.

There is, of course, an age range for the rapid and major changes of puberty. Statistics indicate that 88 percent of girls are pubescent at the age of 14 and 97 percent are mature at the age of 15, while 83 percent of boys are either pubescent or post-pubescent by age 14 and 96 percent are either pubescent or post-pubescent by age 15. This means that 9 out of 10 girls are pubescent by the time they are 14 and in the eighth grade. Meanwhile, more than four out of five boys have also reached pubescence by this time.[1]

Currently, for an understanding of the changes in early adolescence that affects learning and academic progress, educators have turned to Jean Piaget and his theories of child growth and development. In the cognitive development area, the Piagetian theory describes four phases of growth. Firstly, the sensorimotor period, which has little bearing on early adolescence, lasts from birth through 18 to 24 months of age. Secondly, the preoperation period, a transitional stage characterized by intuitive thinking and egocentricity, lasts until ages 7 to 8. This stage also is completed before early adolescence. Thirdly, the period of concrete operations covers the time from ages 7 to 8 until ages 11 to 12. Concrete operations of learning are based on concrete objects and relationships. This stage in cognitive development most nearly coincides with early adolescence. Fourthly, the period of formal operations occurs for most boys and girls between the ages of 11 to 12 or 13 to 14. The youngster is now able to deal with all possible situations without being limited to the empirical. He deals with the abstract projections of thought. This stage of cognitive development is also an important one for the early adolescent.

Purpose of the School

An important area for clarification in this discussion is the understanding of what the pupils in the public schools are expected to become competent at doing. What is the generally accepted purpose of the public schools? Is it simply to teach the three Rs? If so, then what level of competence will constitute mastery by the pupils? If today's complex world demands competence in more concepts, skills, and attitudes than the three Rs, what are these additional requirements?

In fact, the purpose of the public schools for early adolescents has been poorly understood and not stated in a generally accepted philosophy. Consciously or unconsciously, many of these schools have accepted tacitly the philosophy of Plato which is 2,400 years old at this writing. Plato developed his philosophy largely as a response to the Sophists. The Sophists were teachers who taught citizens of ancient Greece how to debate and speak well before

groups of people. They taught a rationale of relativism which insisted that there were no absolute truths. Anything that one person said and believed was as much the truth as anything anyone else stated. All ideas were of equal truth. So the Sophists were the first egalitarians of ideas. Plato argued that there is absolute truth. All truths may be arranged hierarchically with lesser truths leading to the highest truth. Plato held that the only activities by mankind that were worthy were those in pursuit of truth. These beliefs led Plato to his principles of social organization: a society comes closer to the truth (and thus is a better society) if and when the wisest are rulers, the bravest are soldiers, etc. This meant that the best society is one in which everyone does what he does best.[2]

This Platonic philosophy has always supported the schools in their selective search for the best in the class. The search for excellence is Platonic in origin and purpose.

Competence

The next term to be defined here is the word "competence." To educators the name of Carter V. Good is as prestigious as a lexicographer as is the name of Noah Webster. This man from the Queen City of Cincinnati furnishes us with accepted definitions in his Dictionary of Education. Mr. Good has the following to say:

competence, functional	- ability to apply to practical situations the essential principles and techniques of a particular subject-matter field
competence, general occupational	- those skills, concepts, and attitudes needed by all workers regardless of their occupations or specific jobs
competence, specific occupational	- those concepts, skills, and attitudes essential to a broad occupational grouping; those with common usefulness to a family of occupations

It is more than just interesting to take note of a closely related word:

competition	- the action of endeavoring to gain what another endeavors to gain at the same time

The term "competence" cannot be discussed in present-day education without dealing with the "Competency-Based Education" model. This model is a concern for the quality of education and essentially revolves around the concept of mastery learning. The basic premise of mastery learning as stated by Benjamin Bloom is: "Most students (perhaps more than 90 percent) can master what we have to teach them, and it is the task of instruction to find the means which will enable them to master the subject being studied." Students can learn and it is the teacher's responsibility to provide an environment and process in which they can learn. Bloom's position is supported by John Carroll's Model of School Learning (1963). This model makes it clear that aptitude is the amount of time required by the learner to attain mastery of a learning task. This is completely different from the assumption that some students can learn and others cannot. This concept of mastery as a function of time requires considerable change in the way the school views competence. The Platonic view of selection of the best and most competent is certainly not lost. But the manner and climate in which excellence is pursued must be changed.

In addition, this point of view supports the modern humanistic ideas in education. It gives the humanistic school of thought a rationale that relieves it from the label of being merely a modern Sophism. When almost all (90 percent) of the students can master the learning tasks, then educational programs should be designed to allow each student the amount of time needed to master the subject under consideration. Teachers should become diagnosticians and purveyors of various methods of achieving task mastery. Competence in learning in a school for early adolescents may be as much a responsibility of the teacher as of the learner. Accountability would necessarily become a dual accounting for both the teacher and the learner.

Individual differences between learners are factors of importance in all classrooms for early adolescents. In the context of this article the individual differences of note are those that affect learning abilities, skills, styles, attitudes, and behavior. The best mode of learning for an individual might be any of a number of methods, such as reading, kinesthetic and psychomotor methods, didactic or deductive approaches, discovery or inductive methods, problem-solving, Socratic discussions, etc. When a learner's best mode has been diagnosed, it still is necessary to recognize the time and pacing differences between individuals in the learning process. If adequate attention is given to all these considerations, it becomes increasingly apparent that mastery is not a single measure that is applicable to all learners in the same way. Competency or mastery measures should be prepared to accept different but accurate expressions of the concept under study. Accurate explanations of a concept are possible at many levels of power and efficiency.

Conclusion

It seems necessary for each school for early adolescents to identify its own purposes. What are the objectives and goals for each particular school? To answer this question for each school in our democratic society requires some input from every segment of the community which the school is serving. Each and every group which comprises the total school community should contribute to the list of goals for the school. More than that, the representatives of each group should participate in ranking these goals. Which objectives are most important and which are of lesser importance?

Without first arriving at the goals and purposes of the school, it will be little more than guess work to establish norms for judging competencies. If teachers and learners are to be held accountable, it is necessary to arrive democratically at the answer to the questions: Accountable? For what?

The most common defense that educators use to explain the decreasing SAT and ACT scores given to twelfth grade students is that the tests are not

valid. They do not test for what has actually been taught in the schools. This is an important explanation. Since, as earlier stated, the purposes of schools for early adolescents are poorly understood and not stated in a generally accepted way, it is not likely that national standardized tests will succeed in giving a valid picture of the success of instruction in the schools.

Any teacher in any grade level knows there are two remedies for this situation. One can change the test or one can teach for the test only. Surely we will not accept the latter solution. If we accept the former in light of the recommendation that each separate school is responsible for its own list of goals, how can a single standardized test ever be valid?

The purpose of this article is to raise some of the issues facing schools for early adolescents. There is no way this article can present a formula for resolution of these problems that will work for all. May this writing serve only as a clarification of these issues—an aid to fellow workers on these problems.

Notes

[1]Thomas E. Curtis and Wilma W. Bidwell, Curriculum and Instruction for Emerging Adolescents. Menlo Park, Calif.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1977, p. 19.

[2]Alston Chase, "Skipping through College: Reflections on the Decline of the Liberal Arts Education," The Atlantic, vol. 242, no. 3, September 1978, p. 36.

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Dr. Sinks, author of this chapter, succumbed to a heart attack on January 27, 1979. Prior to moving to Minnesota, Tom Sinks was professor of education at Northern Illinois University and principal of the Chute Middle School, Evanston, Illinois. The education of early adolescents has been advanced through the efforts of Thomas A. Sinks. His untimely death leaves a void which will not be readily filled.

Chapter 2 - ACADEMIC COMPETENCY AND THE EARLY ADOLESCENT

by Clifford H. Sweat
EAEAI Editor

Competency in reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic is considered essential if the individual is to become a sustaining and contributing member of society. "Back to the basics" has been a much touted phrase during the past few years. According to the 1977 Gallup pole:

> Forty-seven percent of adults with no children in schools and 55% of those with school-attending children believe we could improve public education by devoting more attention to teaching of basic skills.

While school personnel may agree with the adults who ask the schools to return to the "basics," they are confronted by young people who ask:

> "Who needs to learn how to write? How much writing will I do?"
>
> "Why must I learn this arithmetic? I can get the answers to all of my problems by using my calculator."
>
> "Who needs to read a magazine, newspaper, or book? I can get all the information I need by listening to the radio or by watching TV."

A $4,000,000 contract is publicized in the media. The early adolescent ponders: "How much reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic are required to be a winner of such a contract?"

This chapter has been prepared by teachers or consultants who work in junior high/middle schools of Illinois. Each writer has made an effort to present some specific competencies to be required of boys and girls in (1) language arts, (2) social science, or (3) mathematics. Science has been unavoidably omitted. The writers and the EAEAI executive board members are not presenting these competency goals with the idea that they are all-inclusive. It is expected that teachers, administrators, and patrons of schools will establish competency goals for the adolescents served in the local districts.

A National School Boards Association survey of school board presidents has found that 76 percent of those asked believe that every public school student should "be required to master certain skills." The same percentage believe that every student should have to pass a minimum competency test to receive a high school diploma. However, a majority of those surveyed also oppose any nationwide federally devised test, feeling that control of testing should remain at the local level. The presidents agreed that the main purpose of minimum competency testing should be "to improve teaching and learning" and also that any possible testing should be done at an early grade level to offer the most opportunity for improvement to the student.

"Education Briefs," Education Digest, November 1978, pp. 67-68.

Chapter 2 - ACADEMIC COMPETENCY AND THE EARLY ADOLESCENT

A. COMPETENT KATE AND LANGUAGE ARTS

by Anne Cannon, Language Arts Instructor
McClure Junior High School
Western Springs, Illinois

Kate

. . . Vital Statistics: 13 years old
8th grade
Academic Record: Cs and Ds
Self-esteem: Wobbly
Goals: Social Acceptance
Academic Adequacy

For Kate, a hypothetical early adolescent, language arts has been an essential part of her life since her first attempts to communicate. Preschool language arts experience was primarily joyous and undemanding. Elementary school unveiled the struggle of mastering the skills of reading, writing, and verbalizing "at grade level." Hopefully, Kate's enthusiasm has not been tarnished and she still believes that success in language arts is attainable. What minimum standards or competencies might be expected of our Kate as she hurtles into secondary school?

How Many Pages Is It?
. . . or Reading

The dream of every teacher is to have all students reading at grade level. The attainment of the sixth-grade level is the minimum competency needed to function in today's world; for success in high school the attainment of an eighth-grade reading competency seems paramount. Standardized test results shatter the teachers' dreams. We challenge the true scholars and revel in their successes. We nudge the average student relentlessly. We agonize over the underachiever. Nonetheless, by the time our Kate graduates from eighth grade, she should be competent in the following reading skills:

Decoding: She will read aloud material of an appropriate difficulty level with acceptable pronunciation, expression, and fluency. She will be able to apply word attack skills and will use contextual clues to get appropriate meanings or to redefine and broaden meanings of previously familiar words. She will answer questions that test her ability to get to the explicit and implicit meaning in materials that have been read in an appropriate grade level.

Acquisitive: She will give the meaning that a word or phrase has in material of an appropriate difficulty level.

Evaluative: She will make valid evaluations and judgments concerning any aspect of a selection.

Reference Study: She will make efficient use of reference aids, appraise the usefulness and reliability of the information, and organize the information into outline, summary, and ultimately expository structure.

Literary: She will classify a specific selection as to kind (narrative, descriptive, expository, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, prose, drama, myth, fable, folk-tale, legend). She will identify story elements (setting, plot, characters, theme, mood), investigate an author's style, and recognize examples of effective writing.

To enhance a prescribed reading program and to encourage our flagging Kate, augmentative tactics might include: tapes of some of the reading material; research treasure hunts; play production; analysis of newspaper, TV, and radio stories; vocabulary games; group analyses of stories; "character" interviews; reading aloud; and the inevitable book reports. Outside reading fosters skill development, reading enjoyment, and independent reading. Although Kate's first concern is the length of her book, with encouragement and proper reading-level selection, she should be able to read and report on one book per month. A variety of required book categories (short stories, central character development, mystery, science fiction, fantasy, history, biography, etc.) exposes Kate to diverse writers and literary techniques. This diversification avoids the stifling Judy Blume, M. E. Kerr, or Jay Bennett syndrome. Assorted reporting techniques will allow to develop her writing, verbal, and creative skills.

Early adolescence is a crucial period for turning Kate on to reading. Competency in reading takes her beyond her initial concern about length and allows reading to add new dimensions to her life.

The Incomplete Sentence . . . or Composition

> "Lots of people get up at 5:30 or 6:00. to run. Even when its freezing. I love to run. Especially in the early morning."

The preceding quotation from a seventh-grade theme is representative of Kate's immature composition skills. Upon the completion of eighth grade she should be able to write a paragraph with a topic sentence which is supported by details and includes a clincher or concluding sentence. She should have mastered the mechanics of capitalization and punctuation. She should recognize the different types of paragraphs—descriptive, expository, and narrative.

Reluctance and insecurity hamper many students' progress in composition. And no wonder. A composition done with even minimum effort is an extension of a child's thoughts and creativity. To have conscientious efforts regularly returned with red marks and criticism will deflate even the strongest ego. Putting ideas down on paper is hard. Putting ideas down in an orderly and correct manner is even harder. Correcting composition is no joke either.

Several tactics may help Kate and her teacher. Firstly, an enthusiastic and unhurried introduction to the proposed composition allows ideas to form and enthusiasm to build. If Kate believes she has something to say and the teacher wants to read it, she is on her way. Brain-storming ideas, topic sentences, and viewpoints are stimulating. Secondly, specific directions concerning topic, due date, form, length, etc., are important. Thirdly, a rough draft is a vital step. If possible, the teacher should go over rough drafts individually while the rest of the class is busy on another activity. This individ-

ualized step is where the nitty-gritty of composition and grammar is taught. From the rough draft a final copy requiring few corrections will evolve. Another composition stimulant is non-graded writing such as journals. It is fun to write without being judged; it is also therapeutic. It feels good to write about "Things That Bug Me," "If I Could Change One Thing About Myself," "The Things I'm Really Super At," "The Worst Thing a Teacher Can Do," etc. Not only does the adolescent gain more writing experience, but the teacher gains insight into her pupils. Finally, teachers in other subject areas should be urged to use essay questions on exams. Objective tests are easier to grade, but an essay forces Kate to pull her ideas together and put them on paper. Opportunity to practice writing and encouragement are essential to make Kate a competent writer.

I Always Say, "Between John and I"
. . . or Grammar and Usage

Grammar and usage are the Catch 22 of language arts. Both are learned best through composition, and yet composition cannot be corrected meaningfully unless the student has a working understanding of basic grammatical principles. For instance, unless Kate can recognize a subject and a predicate in a sentence, she will continue to write incomplete sentences and will be unable to correct this error. The same dilemma occurs with pronoun usage, agreement of subject and verb, punctuation errors, and misuse of the clause. Therefore, composition exercises and study of grammatical principles must march hand in hand. Ideally, grammar should be taught individually through composition in order that Kate can recognize the need for clarity and be able to correct her own weaknesses. The impracticality of this approach usually forces the teacher to segregate the two disciplines and pray for a melding of the skills. Revision of composition and proofreading are time consuming and arduous tasks for both Kate and the teacher, but these steps develop Kate's awareness of the effort that is demanded for accurate expression. A competently executed final composition displayed on the bulletin board makes even the most reluctant writer burst with pride.

Despite the forced practicality of teaching grammar and creative writing separately, by the completion of the eighth grade our Kate should be able to understand and identify the basic parts of speech and the parts of a sentence; identify the basic sentence patterns; be aware of the sentence as a grammatical unit and use complete sentences in writing; employ standard usage in formal writing; and demonstrate an awareness of other levels of usage by selecting, developing, and using language appropriate to the audience and the situation.

Some strategies unite grammar study and composition. These are: group writing, correction, presentation of themes, alternated sequences of concentrated grammar and other areas of language arts, grammatical games, art work, competitions, media usage, and partnership drill sheets. These encourage the average student as he struggles with abstract grammatical principles.

Clear and accurate communication is the objective of the years of work that teachers and students invest in grammar and composition study. An important reminder to the teacher and to Kate is that there is a valid reason for this struggle. Kate challenges, "Why do we study this stuff anyhow? I'm never gonna use it." The teacher's answer is important.

Which "there," "their," or "they're" Is It? . . . or Spelling

By junior high school our Kate has undoubtedly analyzed her own spelling ability—it is either her "A" course or she "just can't, never could, and never will be able to spell." These final few years before high school will probably be Kate's last exposure to a formal spelling program. The gifted speller must be challenged; vocabulary building, etymology, and prefix and suffix study should enrich the spelling program. The average and below-average speller benefit from curriculum stressing auditory and visual perception.

With spelling rules, spelling games, spelling dictionaries, spelling mobiles and bulletin boards, spelling awards, and the inevitable Friday dictation, we cajole our Kate to improve her spelling ability.

Through a weekly spelling program, the student should be able to spell 80 percent of the words assigned correctly. The true test of competency is the carry-over into composition. For how many years has our Kate been taught the difference between its and it's, and their, they're, and there? She still confuses them. Until she realizes that she has to spell them correctly, she will probably continue to err.

"Do I Hafta Stand Up Front?"
. . . or Verbal Skills

The din of the lunchroom, the passing period between classes, the students' arrival at assembly, or the unstructured moments during class may mislead the listener as to the necessity of verbal skill instruction. Early adolescents, for the most part, are verbal. They are bursting with enthusiasm and gregariousness. Harnessing the constant verbalization into meaningful communication and encouraging the reticent speaker are important phases of the language arts program. Fluency in speech precedes fluency in writing. Learning to express aloud ideas before a group is an important skill to master.

Our Kate should be able to contribute ideas in small group work, express ideas in class discussion, handle an impromptu speech, and ultimately make a formal three-minute talk, using notes.

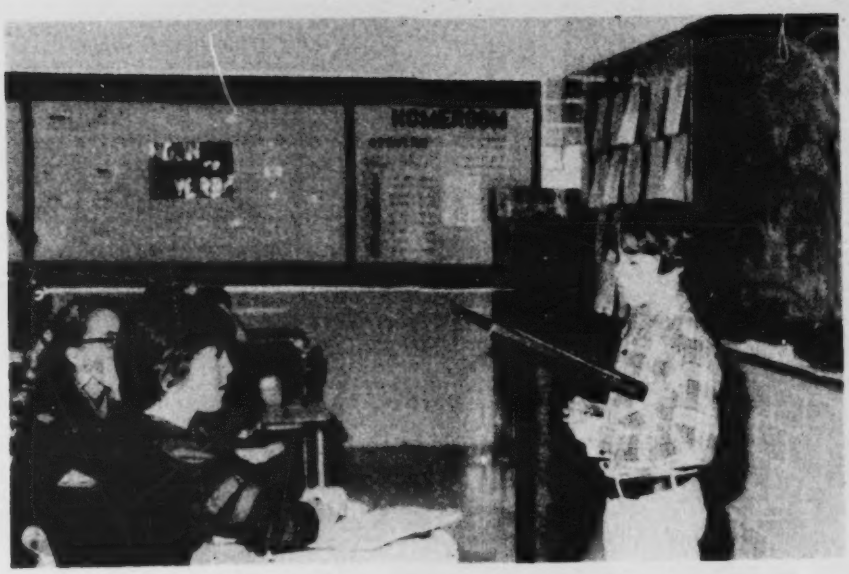
To build confidence, small group work is a good starting point, followed by group presentation of material to the class. The solo panic can be alleviated by a "clutch crutch"—something to show or demonstrate while speaking. Participation in assemblies, school organizations, and plays helps build courage, confidence, and clarity. A shy Kate needs encouragement and a support; a verbose Kate needs steering. The entire audience

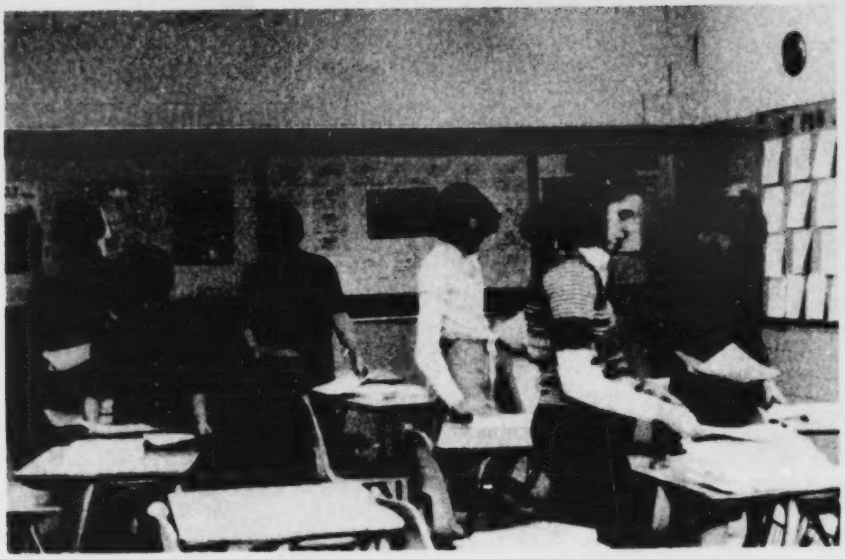
probably needs help with listening skills, which is a side benefit of including verbal skills in the study of language arts.

Conclusion

Our competency goals in language arts for Kate to achieve before she continues to high school are astringent and demanding. The road to success is multi-laned as Kate, her teachers, her peers, and her family travel it. At times all are traveling side by side. Sometimes one cuts in front of the other and interferes. Sometimes one slips onto the shoulder as the rest whiz by. The road contains steep hills—up and down. It curves, it is bumpy, and it occasionally detours. It does have a destination—academic competency—and to that end we race to flag Kate across the finish line.

Acknowledgment - "Exit Objectives in Written Composition and Reading for 8th Grade Students," LaGrange, Illinois: Language Arts Articulation Committee, Lyons Township, 1978.





Chapter 2 - ACADEMIC COMPETENCY AND THE EARLY ADOLESCENT

B. EARLY ADOLESCENTS ARE READY FOR THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

by Georgia Petrie, Social Science Instructor
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The social sciences provide early adolescents with a body of knowledge about mankind. Generalizations and concepts are organized into distinct, yet related, disciplines.

A social science program for early adolescents must be carefully planned, well organized, skillfully presented, and continuously evaluated. It is the responsibility of the school staff to introduce these young students to the disciplines and to provide specialized instruction, in at least three areas, appropriate to the maturity and experience of this age group.

The Social Science Program

Children enter the early adolescent education program with a variety of previous experiences, attitudes, and skills. The adolescent age is one of transition, during which students try to "grow up" and actively seek independence. The program offered to them in school must include more than what is available from the publisher at a given time. A program should be constructed which has continuity as well as a sequence of new ideas and experiences. Such program development is the joint responsibility of the teachers and administrators. Since all children at the junior high/middle school level are involved in the program, prudent coordination must be achieved:

1. between the social science programs of the grade levels (K-12). The development of skills must be found in all grade-level programs.
2. between the social sciences and the other academic areas within the school program. There is an obvious relationship of skills in all areas of the school program.

Each junior high/middle school student must have the chance to accept the responsibility for cultivating the skills associated with the social science program.

Three areas appropriate for concentrated study by early adolescents are history, economics, and geography. An understanding of these subjects can aid boys and girls to further study within the other disciplines. Teachers must create activities which will aid early adolescents to focus on the development of their competency level. Care must be taken that each student understands the task to be done.

sociology	religion	geography
philosophy	history	psychology
economics	political science	anthropology

Diagram 1. Social Science Disciplines with a Possible Specialized Study

In addition to the basic program (Diagram 1), students should be provided with a series of elective segments. These segments could be designed to fit 6-, 10-, or 12-week time periods. Through the electives, the boys and girls would gain the opportunity to:

1. gain experience in making selections
2. study materials of specific interest
3. apply skills offered within the base program
4. become proficient in skills offered within the structure of the specific elective segment

There are many possible choices of subjects for elective segments. Which segments could be offered to students would depend upon the individual program, student choice, staff, and availability of resources.

The Law	Independent Study	Early Civilizations
Asian Giants	Military History	The Earth and Oceans
U. S. World Interests	World Islands	Selected World Governments

Diagram 2. Possible Topics for Elective Segments

Early Adolescent Student Competency

To raise the achievement level of boys and girls has always been a goal of American education. Professional educators have always had an interest in student competency. They share this interest with both the parents and the young people. During the junior high/middle school years, students have many skills to acquire and perfect. As individuals, the youth are ready to attain and practice skills.

The development of different skills is often a simultaneous process. The teacher is required to provide leadership, supervision, and constant encouragement. Suggestions must be made to students as a group, as well as to each boy and girl. Through program development and specific assignments, provision must be made for repetition. The amount of repetition—"drill"—will differ with the individual student.

Junior High/Middle School Skills

The skills offered to early adolescents are many in number and diverse in character. Opinions vary as to which skills are of most import to the students. The early adolescent is expected to gain the ability to:

1. read social science materials
2. develop a vocabulary pertinent to the social sciences

3. gain a background of general information
4. make appropriate use of the library/learning resource center
5. accumulate needed data
6. use encyclopedia, dictionaries, almanacs, and other specialized reference materials
7. interpret graphs, charts, and pictorial material
8. use an index
9. take and use notes
10. compare percentages, estimates, and numbers
11. use maps and globes
12. create graphs, pictorial material, posters, and charts
13. prepare written/oral reports
14. reflect upon current events
15. outline social science material
16. draw conclusions
17. summarize social science material
18. take part in committee work
19. contribute to discussions
20. write social science tests
21. learn the techniques of study
22. achieve the ability to formulate questions
23. organize thoughts
24. present suggestions and ideas to others
25. remember selected facts
26. use media materials
27. consider review techniques
28. interview people
29. evaluate his own work
30. formulate examples
31. cultivate the listening skills

Goals for Student Competency

Each social science (Diagram 1) has objectives to be reached by junior high/middle school students. Within the scope of their individual abili-

ties, boys and girls are expected to work towards the achievement of these goals. Since adults usually set the goals, it is important that each student understand his role in the learning process. The young adolescent must have confidence that if he learns and uses skills, he will be able to make progress towards the attainment of these goals. Many students may be able to assist the adults in the selection of goals for the social science program. Some important social science goals are to help the early adolescent to:

1. develop a desire for learning
2. develop a pride in work and a feeling of self-worth
3. develop ability in all social science skills
4. understand the relationship between man and the environment
5. understand the concept of regions: political, economic, natural, and social
6. explain the causes and consequences of man's activities: migration and urbanization
7. understand the different types of government found throughout the world
8. consider the importance of American agriculture, industry, and trade
9. reflect upon the expanding role of government within the lives of the people

Evaluation of Student Competency

The evaluation of student competency is a continuous process. More than one form of evaluation must be used. Opinions differ on which method of evaluation is most useful.

Evaluation involves the teacher and the individual student. The student must understand the evaluation process and the reasons for the activity. As a result of evaluation, the student must be able to plan for further skill development.

Adults expect a great deal from junior high/middle school boys and girls. Expectations seem to grow each year. Professional educators must continue to

plan, organize, present, and evaluate the social science skills program. Students must accept responsibility for their work. Early adolescents are ready for self-direction in their continuous search for competency.

Self-ratings (Oral)	Classroom Assignments (Grades)	Classroom Observations
Student Interviews	Standardized Tests	Individual Check Lists
Students Rate Other Students	Self-ratings (Written)	Written Notes on Individual Students (Long Term)

Diagram 3. Common Examples of Evaluation Methods

Chapter 2 - ACADEMIC COMPETENCY AND THE EARLY ADOLESCENT

C. COMPETENCIES IN MATHEMATICS

by Patricia A. Kean, Mathematics Supervisor
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Will minimal competency testing solve the problems of achievement in mathematics? Many lay people feel that governmental bodies—federal and/or state—should mandate certain basic standards of proficiency before an individual receives a high school diploma. There is no educator who would not agree that a high school diploma should mean more than a recognition of a certain number of years of school attendance. Yet, educators might disagree with what standards might be set down by legislators. Do we favor competence based on survival skills, such as consumer-based items, or do we favor setting a level of competency based on check points along the way on many skills and concepts?

Little of the above should be considered a priority for discussion among math teachers. Political intervention will not help. The problem of low achievement will be solved by the "technician." True, there are some teachers who do not teach and there are some students who do not learn, but legislation will not solve these complex problems.

The minimal competency movement has swept the United States. In the past few years, 40 states have adopted some form of competency education. Illinois Senator John Nimrod has proposed state testing in Illinois. A federal bill, HR 9574, proposes national standards of proficiency.

Reacting to the political oversimplification of the education process has recently slowed down policy making by the federal and state legislatures. The IOE, HEW, and ASCD have spoken out on the subject. Legal and financial pitfalls have been discussed (Phi Delta Kappan, February 1978). As a result, we see state departments of education and local school districts taking a stand in relation to the political pressures.

It is at the local school district level where setting goals, designing curriculum to meet these goals, and setting academic standards must remain.

Several years ago, "new" math was under attack because it was felt the schools were avoiding teaching computational skills. Middle/junior high schools rushed in with "crash" programs and spent additional time on developing computational skills to get the students ready for high school. Secondary school teachers felt precision and accuracy were missing, yet conceptualization and attitudes toward math had improved. The pendulum began to swing from "new" math to the "back to basics" movement. Oh, yes, another new term—"accountability"—came on the scene, followed shortly by "behavioral objectives," "individualized instruction," and "minimal competencies."

As the math supervisor in a suburban school district, there was no need to find any of these movements or terms to be alarming, nor was there a need to jump on a bandwagon for any particular idea. For answers and solutions to the concerns, one naturally should turn to those who teach math to boys and girls. A committee of teachers, representing all grade levels and all schools within a district, should develop a sound math curriculum for all grades, based on the local district philosophy and goals. Every teacher of math can have input in the development of the curriculum. Several years are needed to develop and write a curriculum guide which can and will be used by teachers. Implementation time is necessary with numerous in-service sessions with staff. In this manner, curriculum development will be ongoing, and math curriculum guides will become vital tools for teachers.

What do we mean by a sound curriculum? It is one that meshes all the skills and concepts. Since math is an area that can be measured by performance, the curriculum can be written in performance objectives. Defining when the skills and concepts are to be introduced and continued is built into the curriculum. The identification and grade-level placement of specific objectives become the mastery portion of the curriculum. There-

fore, the competencies expected of students are clearly defined and measuring a pupil's status relative to mastery can be done through a carefully selected criterion-testing program. Monitoring procedures may be developed to enable teachers to assist with the growth and achievement of each individual student. By continually evaluating the instructional program being provided, the necessary instruction can be planned for meeting the child's needs as related to expected outcomes.

The teacher, administrator, parent, and student must be involved in the total program. The curriculum provides the framework and objectives for the teacher. The teacher plans an instructional program based on the student's level of achievement. With early adolescents, individual profiles should be available for the student's use—an excellent stage of development for accepting some responsibility for his own learning. The math administrator should monitor pupil profiles and meet on a regularly scheduled basis with the teacher to discuss progress and assist in providing for any intervention required. Several times throughout the year, the teacher should sit down with the parents to discuss and interpret the child's profile, reporting achievement, instruction received, and future instruction necessary to eliminate deficiencies or enrich experiences.

If the described procedure is followed, the expected math competencies will be met by a high percentage of students, the public disenchantment with the school will diminish, and a need for political intervention will be eliminated.

How do we assure that we do not lose a student "between the cracks"? If the math curriculum is designed by performance objectives, all necessary skills and concepts to be mastered are measurable. The selection of a criterion-referenced testing program is one of the keys to success. An inventory in the fall, keyed to the objectives, gives base-line data for the teacher. Instructional programs can then be designed to insure that the needs of the student are met. This process must begin at the kindergarten level with year-to-year profiles being kept. A need for "crash"

programs and/or large numbers of remedial and tutorial classes at the junior high/middle school level would not be necessary if proper monitoring and necessary intervention take place from the beginning of the student's school experience. Once a teacher has identified the needs, through a diagnostic inventory, and has planned an instructional program, the use of short, interim tests can be administered to document mastery of objectives not previously obtained.

At the junior high/middle school level we become concerned over the wide range of achievement levels of students in our classes. Hopefully, if the designed program is carried out from kindergarten on, the achievement range will narrow. However, it is an expected outcome to observe wider levels of achievement as students progress through the grades. In order to provide the necessary program to meet the needs of all students, well organized instructional programs are needed and should be expected.

The academic, emotional, and social growth of early adolescents varies widely. To teach math skills to a classroom of 25 to 39 students, the instruction must be individualized. To "take the child where he is" in his math understanding and achievement demands an instructional program referred to as "individualized." Many middle/junior high school teachers find this term, "individualized instruction," most frustrating. However, individualization does not necessarily mean one-to-one instruction. Of course, no one teacher with 30 students can individualize in this manner. Yet, observation shows many math classes where the student has a text and spends the class period progressing at his own rate while the teacher walks up and down the aisles helping the student when asked. If this method of instruction is used, the cracks widen and the range of achievement levels widen. Little or no instruction takes place. This is unacceptable math instruction! The teacher has base-line information from the fall, diagnostic inventories, and by using a class profile, he can readily plan instruction through the grouping of students. Proper intervention for students with deficient skills can and should be met with administrative assistance. Students demonstrating outstanding performance

can often progress with minimum instruction, with needs often being met through state or local "gifted" programs. The remaining, or majority of, students in the class can be instructed in small groups. Careful planning is necessary by, and should be expected of, the teacher. Of course, this is in reference to heterogeneous classes with "tracking" within the classroom. Philosophically, it is difficult to justify homogeneous classes, totally, during the junior high/middle school experience. A good math teacher, through careful instructional planning, can better meet the humanistic needs of early adolescents in a setting of heterogeneity. There are accepted exceptions to this philosophy when math students have completed the curriculum at the junior high/middle school and are ready to move into the high school curriculum. Because of certain standardized requirements, students must meet algebra course content under the guidelines of the secondary institution.

Remembering that excellence in math achievement is a goal, the expected competencies of a student completing eighth grade are too numerous to list. The student's math profile or the mastery section of the curriculum guide, which perhaps totals over 300 objectives, would be the published list. It is hoped that the child entering high school would have had a math program assuring the understanding and solid background in the following areas:

I. Whole Numbers
   - A. Addition
   - B. Subtraction
   - C. Multiplication
   - D. Division

II. Rational Numbers
   - A. Fractions
   - B. Decimals
   - C. Signed Numbers

III. Properties
   - A. Commutative
   - B. Associative
   - C. Distributive
   - D. Identity Elements
   - E. Inverse Relations

IV. Applications

- A. Rounded Numbers, Estimation, Significant Digits
- B. Sequences
- C. Missing Addends, Factors and Digits
- D. Inequalities and Number Theory

V. Measure and Geometry

- A. Measurement—Metric Geometry
- B. Linear Measure
- C. Money
- D. Weight
- E. Temperature
- F. Time
- G. Points, Lines, Segments, Rays
- H. Plane Figures
- I. Solid Figures
- J. Symmetry
- K. Maps

VI. Place Value

VII. Numeration Systems

VIII. Percent and Averages

IX. Sets (Not Theory)

X. Problem Solving

The above list gives only a broad guideline. In any one of these topics there would be many competencies to be mastered. As an example, the following list develops the performances expected in one of the general areas.

Percent and Average

- The student will be able to convert a number written as a fraction with denominator 100 to percent form.
- The student will be able to convert a number written as a percent to a fraction.
- The student will be able to convert a number written as a decimal number to its equivalent percent form.
- The student will be able to convert a number written as a fraction with denominator 1,000 to percent form.
- The student will be able to convert a number greater than one to percent form.
- The student will be able to compute a given percent of a given whole number.
- Given a set of whole numbers, the student will be able to compute their average.

The original question posed: Will mandated minimal competency tests in math improve performance? The answer is definitely "NO"! We are all aware that the schooling of children is a continuous process requiring much insight and sensitivity. A program has been identified which will help meet goals which have set high academic standards. Procedures for evaluating growth of students and methods for assisting students in meeting the expected goals have been described. The expected competencies are set forth in a well-designed, performance-objective curriculum.

The term "minimal" should be deleted because competencies written into the curriculum are expectencies for all students. By setting desired outcomes for achievement, we can expect high student performance. We certainly do not set minimal expectations for students unless we design curriculum for students with limited potential. When teachers, students, parents, and administrators enforce expectations of excellence, we will find few students falling below the set standards.

Math competency related to promotion has not been discussed here. It is felt that a single test should not decide the passing or failing of a student. Following the described program, a student's math progress will have been carefully monitored and documented. The future placement of the student should depend upon the child's total adjustment, taking into consideration the factors of age, academic achievement, and social and emotional development. Decisions regarding retention or acceleration should be arrived at through mutual understanding and agreement between parents and school staff. Whatever placement adjustment is found to be necessary, it is hoped it will come early in the child's school experience so as not to be necessary during the crucial early adolescent years.

Chapter 3 - CULTURAL COMPETENCIES FOR THE EARLY ADOLESCENT

by Jody Payne, Art Specialist
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Adolescence is a time of rapid growth and development, a period when the individual is vacillating between child and adult. One day he is grown up; the next day, he is a child. He is searching for himself by questioning everything and everyone around him. This is a time of exploration to find out what he is really interested in and what abilities he possesses. He is changing from the inward, protected realm of the child, to the outward, take-charge world of the adult. He wants to know, "What is the world like?" He questions, "Where do I fit in?" He is anxious to discover more about the world around him. He develops intense interests which change when something different comes along. Whatever it was today, you can bet it will be different tomorrow!

During this time of change, the early adolescent develops a strong desire to be competent. He desperately wants to be really good at something; at the same time, he is worried about what the teacher thinks of him and, more terrifying than that, what his peers think of him. He is dealing with fluctuating emotions and feelings he has never experienced before concerning his relationships with other people and his concept of himself. This period of rapid emotional, physical, and intellectual growth requires a great deal of understanding and help from our educational system.

Unfortunately, this educational system is geared toward only one phase of growth: intellectual growth. It does not provide enough time for the growth of feelings, emotions, and sensitivities which enables boys and girls to grow as humans. Man must be able to react to his world. It is this reaction to what man sees, hears, and feels that takes tangible form in the arts. Our school programs are arranged, for the most part, in such a way that early adolescent education provides the terminal experience in the

cultural arts. Programs in art and music which are designed to provide an opportunity for the expression of the very things which make us human are dropped from the curriculum for the vast majority of students when they reach high school. Therefore, a strong, vital cultural arts program is a necessity in the junior high/middle school curriculum.

The cultural competencies to be developed within the early adolescent involve three basic areas: awareness, participation, and appreciation. Music awareness requires a first-hand experience with the language of music. For example, the music program at Edison Middle School, Champaign, provides a nine-week experience for sixth-grade students. During the first two weeks, the basic language of music—the signs, symbols, and terms—is introduced. The third week is devoted to rhythm. The fourth and fifth weeks cover the sounds of the past: the renaissance, baroque, classic, romantic, and contemporary. The sixth week includes the sounds of today: the pop scene and country. During the seventh and eighth weeks, individual students choose a major study in a workshop setting of guitar, piano, auto harp; recording, composing, singing; or reading and reporting. In the ninth week, a one-week mini-study gives students the choice of a different area selected from the major studies. The emphasis is on exploration with an opportunity to develop competencies in the areas of choice.

During this time of developing skills, the early adolescent can become very inhibited, which causes a problem in his participation. His skills are not up to the level that he feels adequate, so frustration results. He wants to express ideas and feelings but because of the lack of skills and peer pressure—"What will the other kids think of me?"—he can become extremely inhibited. He becomes so afraid that he does not want to participate in singing or to produce art work that someone else might see. To overcome this problem, the cultural arts must provide experiences to draw the early adolescent out of himself and to enjoy participation in the arts. Art and music must be the two areas in the school experience where the early adolescent can express himself without feeling that he must conform to someone else's standards. If these two areas are to be relevant to the

early adolescent's needs, art and music must provide avenues by which he can express feelings about himself and his society that he may not have an opportunity to express elsewhere. Because he wants to be accepted, this is the time for group projects that encourage him to participate by letting him feel that he has something valuable to contribute. Being one of the group is of the utmost importance to the adolescent.

One way of filling this need is by presenting concerts and musicals which involve large groups of students. Edison Middle School has three elective choruses to provide this group experience. In addition to the "Swing Set Chorus" for eighth graders which meets one evening a week, a sixth- and seventh-grade chorus meets after school weekly and an "I Couldn't Make It Any Other Night Chorus" of sixth, seventh, and eighth graders meets one night a week. Two musical productions were presented last year involving middle school students, parents, the home economics department, the art department, and high school students. Excerpts from the Broadway musical Annie involved 180 sixth and seventh graders. It's a Fine Life, based on the musical Oliver was presented by 250 eighth graders. Assisting in the productions were parents who helped with dialogue, make-up, and lighting; the home economics department which made costumes; and the art department which made props, posters, programs, and flyers. High school drama students helped with sets, lighting, and make-up. To provide a wide range of opportunity for participation, double casting was employed in both productions.

The production of art, which is usually a solitary experience, can be geared to group participation, also. Large murals have proved to be a very effective group activity. During the "Preview '77" summer school program, in 1976, which preceded Champaign Unit 4's change from a junior high school organization to a middle school plan, the "Camps and Camping" team consisting of five classes of sixth- and seventh-grade students created a chalk mural. After a field trip to Chanute Air Force Base, each class discussed the trip and chose areas to illustrate. Each student contributed something to the mural which was hung in the hallway outside his classroom for

several weeks. Another very successful project has been a large mural painted on masonite and displayed permanently near the Edison Middle School office. This mural was made by students in the art classes to illustrate school activities. The students take pride in showing off their part of the mural to their friends. They feel they have contributed something to the school and are helping to make it their place.

Many of our schools are uninviting to early adolescents. When they arrive at the building, they see nothing that is theirs, only lockers, long halls, and bare walls. No wonder they like to write on those bare walls! Vandalism has always been a problem in our schools, but by livening up the hallways with art work made by the students this problem can be avoided. The young people will begin to feel that this place is theirs when they have been involved in creating a mural or when they see their individual work displayed. They won't want to vandalize something that belongs to them.

In elementary schools evidence of the children's work is all around. Art work is displayed in the classrooms and out in the hallways, but as the children move on to junior high/middle/high school, the environment becomes more and more sterile. In many secondary buildings, there is nothing to mark the students' leaving, nothing that belongs to them. This is a human need: "I am here, notice me!" Art work that the students have made can change this atmosphere and make them feel that they have left their mark in a positive way.

This desire to mark our passing is very strong in all of us. We need to be noticed but we also need to learn <u>how</u> to notice. This is what awareness is: To really see and experience a work of art or, better yet, to fully become aware of color, form, and texture of something as common as the bark on a tree and to become totally involved in that bark to the extent of wanting to react to what was experienced. This reaction might take form in a piece of music or a work of art. This is what cultural arts experience is all about. A true artistic experience is the difference between seeing and hearing and just identifying what is seen or heard.

The ability to notice what is in the environment around us is an important tool in learning. The competency to produce art can be greatly enhanced by experiences in awareness which is nothing more than careful looking. The early adolescent may say to the art teacher, "I can't draw a car," but this is not what he is <u>really</u> saying. In reality he is saying, "I don't know enough about a car because what I know and showed in my drawing doesn't look right." He hasn't had experience in careful, analytical looking. The ability to look, analyze, and then react is the competency which must be developed. This is the competency that enables an artist to portray what he sees so well. He sees what the average person sees but he has the ability to "glorify the ordinary" by his heightened awareness of the world and as a result produces art.

In music, awareness of the various forms of the language of music—the signs, symbols, terms, rhythms—will help the early adolescent to produce music more easily and to appreciate what he hears. He needs to be aware of the wide variety of music; there is something else in music besides the rock music he hears on the radio. It would be a shame if he had never heard a musical comedy or listened to classical music.

The cultural arts program in the junior high/middle school should provide for the exploration of the many different forms of the arts. After becoming aware of the many forms of the arts, the early adolescent must then develop skills enabling him to participate with confidence. This is the time to explore many new, exciting areas. He will be fascinated by new processes: linoleum block printing, recorder playing, fire brick carving. Competency can be achieved through active participation; however, jumping from one process to another will not provide the basic competencies the individual needs in later life. Along with active participation, he needs to develop a foundation in the language of art and music. What is color, contrast, rhythm, form, space, and time? After learning this language, he will have the tools to express his ideas through participation. If he does not acquire these competencies in junior high/middle school, he will not feel comfortable to participate in the cultural arts later.

Art is our visual language; music, our auditory language. Both offer an entirely different vocabulary for communication from the vocabulary of our verbal language. Considerable emphasis is placed on verbal competencies in school; little emphasis is placed on visual and auditory communication. The old saying that "A picture is worth a thousand words" is true. Many early adolescents are too shy and inhibited to express their thoughts, feelings, and emotions in words, but they will express them through the arts if given the opportunity. Communication is a human need. The early adolescent has a lot to tell about himself and needs the opportunity to express it in many ways. Participation in the cultural arts helps adults to know more about the youth, and, most important of all, the arts help the early adolescent to know more about himself.

Appreciation is another vital competency to be developed during the junior high/middle school years. This is the end of active participation in the cultural arts for the majority of students. The early adolescent will now become a consumer of the arts rather than a producer. He will begin spending money on jewelry, clothing, records, tapes, etc. He needs exposure to and an awareness of the wide variety of art forms—both good and bad—which are available. He needs to be able to separate the "trash" from the "treasure." He needs to know what has gone before and why some have endured and others have not. In our culture, today, many people have become disillusioned with the quality of goods that have been produced. There is a healthy revival of interest in objects that have been hand-crafted as evidenced by adult interest in crafts. They realize that more is not necessarily better and that a hand-crafted item will endure where a manufactured product may not. Many adults are returning to school to experience the joy of creating something personal and lasting.

There is a very heady feeling from looking at a piece of pottery and knowing that this is mine—there is no other quite like it in the world. This idea of self, of personal reactions to the world, that this would not exist if not for me must be developed within the early adolescent. When he has had the opportunity to participate in the cultural arts, the youth

can better appreciate what he sees and hears. He will have a better understanding and appreciation of what is involved in producing a work of art or a piece of music when he has done it himself. He knows what instruments are being played and can pick up the beat because of previous experience with music. He can look at a piece of pottery and know what it feels like to have clay on his hands and to form it the way he wants it to be. He can empathize with the potter because he has done it too. Whether he likes or dislikes the piece of music or the work of art is purely personal, but knowing how it was done will help him to appreciate the art form and judge its value.

Through awareness, participation, and appreciation of the cultural arts, the early adolescent will grow in his competencies. The cultural arts can play a very real part in the total development of the adolescent both intellectually and emotionally. An understanding of the arts is vital to the growth of the human qualities of the individual. Without the arts, we cease to be human for the artistic reaction of man to his world is the thing that endures. An artist, naturally, has put it best. Ernest Hemmingway, in Green Hills of Africa, wrote:

> A country, finally, erodes and the dust blows away, the people all die and none of them were of any importance permanently, except those who practiced the arts . . . a thousand years makes economics silly and a work of art endures forever, but it is very difficult to do. . . .

Chapter 4 - PHYSICAL COMPETENCIES OF EARLY ADOLESCENTS

by Fritz Kuhajda, Physical Education Instructor
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The primary purpose of this article is to present a brief résumé of physical competencies a student should reach by the end of the eighth grade or prior to entering the high school. The physical goals are achievable and are a measurable factor of the student's achievements over a three-year junior high school period. The tasks that must be performed were formulated through physical fitness testing and an examination of the skills in individual and group sports and activities.

As in other related fields of education, statistical figures vary between individuals and classes. Variables such as physical, mental, and social growth of the individual, exposure to economic and environmental conditions, instruction, school district and community input, and funding of physical education programs affect the demands and the physical competencies required of the student. This study involves all physical education classes on a coeducational basis. Players involved in interscholastic or intramural activities are excluded.

Hufford Junior High School has an enrollment of approximately 850 students. This includes boys and girls in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. The school is located 40 miles southwest of Chicago. The community is industrial and approximately one half of the 80,000 population is composed of so-called minority groups.

During the course of three years in Hufford, all boys and girls are involved in these physical education activities: calisthenics, soccer, field hockey (girls), speedball, flag football, basketball, volleyball, track and field, softball, basic movement, wrestling (boys), universal gym, square dance, apparatus (horse, buck, parallel bars), trampoline, rope climbing, peg board, line soccer, relay races, and floor hockey.

Lack of space prevents this article from covering all physical education areas adequately. The three areas covered—flag football, parallel bars, and physical fitness—will give the reader an insight into how competencies are acquired and what is required of the students. Other areas of competencies are put in capsule form by means of a check list.

From the physical education guidelines of the school district, individual learning units have been devised for instructional purposes and as goals to be achieved by the students in each activity. Students are tested on the cognitive domain and given performance tests on their individual physical competencies. All classes, except wrestling and hockey, are coeducational.

Flag Football

The learning unit on flag football shows the student that basic physical competencies of flag football cannot be learned unless he realizes that the cognitive domain and physical aspects of all sports are correlated. A general objective of flag football would be to learn the skills of tackle football, without tackling and using expensive equipment, in a relatively safe situation. Specific objectives are to learn the fundamental football skills and general rules, to set up plays and defense, and to acquire skills for leisure-time activity. In the unit, a graph portrays the smaller dimension of a football field and equipment needed to carry out the activity.

Learning Unit I deals with the cognitive area: football terminology. Terms such as "offense," "defense," "center snap," "down," "forward pass," "punt," "extra points," "touchdown," "safety," "touchback," "line of scrimmage," "lateral," "fumble," "offside," "penalties," etc., are defined and explained.

Learning Unit II deals with the cognitive area of flag football rules. Example:

Set of Rules on the Kick-off

A. If ball is caught in the air or is on the ground, receiver may:
   1. run with the ball
   2. hand it off to a teammate
   3. throw a lateral pass to a teammate

B. If out-of-bounds, it is:
   1. not touched—replay
   2. touched by receiver—ball put in play where it went out-of-bounds
   3. in the end zone—touchback—take out to 10-yard line

Learning Unit III deals with the blocking aspects of flag football. The specific objective is to legally block the opponent from pulling the flag of the offensive ball carrier.

A. Position—blocking person between ball carrier and defensive person.

B. Offensive blocker—hands on chest—blocks in upright or semi-crouched position.

C. Defensive person—can use the hands.

D. Safety—roll blocks—cross body blocks not allowed.

E. Blocker—moves with snap of the ball—does a continuous olock—not a brush block.

Other units give instruction and competencies in the skills related to centering the ball, stopping the offense, passing, pass catching, kick-off, punting, and playing strategy.

At the end of the football unit, a written test is given on the cognitive domain, and a performance test is given on the fundamental skills.

Parallel Bars

As an individual activity, a unit on the parallel bars was chosen to illustrate the same type of procedure. The general objectives are to develop strength and power in the arms, chest, and back; to develop balance, timing, and co-ordination; and to instill confidence in the performance of

a task. The specific objectives are designed to aid the student to overcome fear and to gain confidence in executing simple stunts, to show the student how to develop simple stunts into a routine, and to give advanced students an opportunity to perform more demanding tasks. Terminology used in reference to the parallel bars such as "spotter," "straight-arm support," "dip," "swing," "mount," "dismount," "handrails," "routine," and "safety" are explained to the class.

Learning Unit I deals with the straight-arm support. The specific objective is to develop strength in the muscles of the arms, chest, and back and to be able to mount the bars.

A. The hands are placed in a regular grip on the parallel bars, and the individual jumps into a straight-arm position.

B. The arms are straight and at the sides of the body.

C. The chest is out, body slightly arched, and the toes are pointed downward.

Learning Unit II deals with the straight-arm dismount. The specific competency is to clear the parallel bars.

A. Face away from the bars, jump to a straight-arm support at the end of the bars.

B. Without bending the arms, swing backward and forward.

C. On a forward swing, push off and out and land in a standing position on the mat.

Other learning units demand competencies in the swing, straight-arm walk, straddle seat and travel, dips, side mount, back dismount, front dismount, front-support turn, single-leg cut-off, and shoulder stand. Testing is done on routines developed by the student.

Physical Fitness

A Physical Fitness Circuit was devised specifically to develop the cardio-vascular parts of the body, not only for health reasons but to

supplement the loss of vigorous exercises in such recreational games as volleyball and softball and in other activities. In addition to a general warmup for other activities, the circuit develops muscular strength, endurance, co-ordination, and flexibility. Body conditioning exercises in the circuit include competencies in push-ups, sit-ups, squat thrust, jumping jack, rope skipping, leg overs, front bends, bent-arm hangs, line touches, step-ups, burpees, and chin-ups.

A performance test is given by the instructor at the end of every six weeks. All groups proceed from one level to the next at the discretion of the instructor.

Conclusion

The competencies required of students in other than the three areas listed above are shown in the accompanying charts of group and individual activities.

In summation: Although physical competencies required of students will vary between schools and school districts because of the diversity of programs, physical plants and equipment, and funding for physical education programs, these basic physical competencies should be expected of each student by the end of the eighth grade.

INDIVIDUAL SPORTS OR ACTIVITIES

	Buck	Horse	Parallel Bars
Knee Mount	x	x	
Courage Dismount	x	x	
Squat Vault	x	x	
Straddle Vault	x	x	
Wolf Mount	x	x	
Flank Vault	x	x	
Front Vault	x	x	
Wolf Vault		x	
Rear Vault	x	x	
Mount--Dismount	x	x	x
Thigh Rest		x	
Chest Stand		x	
Squat Mount		x	
Hand Spring		x	
Thief Vault		x	
Straight-Arm Support			x
Straight-Arm Walk			x
Swing			x
Straddle-Seat Travel			x
Straddle Seat			x
Dips			x
Rear Dismount			x
Front Dismount			x
Single-Leg Cut-off			x
Shoulder stand			x

	Wrestling	Track	Trampoline
Stance	x		
Referee's Position	x		
Takedown	x		
3 Escapes	x		
5 Holds	x		
Starting Position		x	
50-100 Dashes		x	
High Jump		x	
Long Jump		x	
Shot--Discus		x	
Mount--Dismount			x
Jump--Knee Bounce			x
Knee Drop			x
Seat Drop			x
Back Drop			x
Front Drop			x
Routines			x

INDIVIDUAL SPORTS OR ACTIVITIES

	Tumbling	Basic Movement	Universal Gym	Peg Board	Rope Climbing
Courage Vault	x				
Bridge Up	x				
Forward Roll	x				
Backward Roll	x				
Tripod	x				
Hand Stand	x				
Head Stand	x				
Cart Wheels	x				
Round Off	x				
Back Bend	x				
Back Walkover (G)	x				
Front Walkover (G)	x				
Hand Springs	x				
Forward Sommersault	x				
Movement Exercises		x			
Square Dance		x			
Modern Dance		x			
Chest-Leg-Shoulder Press			x		
Arm Curls			x		
Chinning Sit Ups			x		
Straight Vertical				x	
Two Hands Both Feet					x
Two Hands Only					x
Inverted Hang					x
Leg Extension			x		
Leg Curls			x		

TEAM SPORTS

	Flag Football	Basketball	Softball	Volleyball	Soccer	Speedball	Field Hockey (Girls)	Floor Hockey
Passing	x	x			x	x	x	x
Kicking	x				x	x		
Throwing	x	x	x		x	x		x
Shooting		x						
Centering	x							
Dribbling		x			x	x	x	x
Volleying				x	x	x		x
Serving				x				
Bumping				x				
Spiking				x				
Pitching			x					
Hitting			x					x
Running	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Lifting						x		
Blocking	x			x		x		
Catching	x	x	x			x		
Fielding			x					
Driving							x	
Bulling							x	
Tackling					x		x	
Trapping					x	x	x	
Trapping or Lifting Ball						x		

PHYSICAL FITNESS CIRCUIT

	Level A	Level B	Level C	Level D	Level E
Push Ups	G- 5 B-10	G-10 B-15	G-15 B-17	G-20	G-20
Sit Ups	G-10 B-20	G-20 B-25	G-30 B-30	G-40 B-40	G-50 B-50
Jumping Jacks	G-20 B-20	G-40			
Leg Overs	B-10	B-12			
Lateral Bends	G-10				
Bent-Arm Hang	all 15 sec	all 20 sec			
Rope Jumping	G-25 B-25	G-35 B-30	G-45 B-35	G-50 B-40	G-50 B-50
Squat Thrust		B-15	B-18		
Front Thrust		G-20			
Step Ups			G-20		G-30
Chin Ups			G- 2 B- 3	G- 4 B-10	G- 5 B-10
Line Touch			G-10	G-20 B-20	
Back Stretcher			B-10		
Burpee				B-20	B-25
Leg Raise					B 45 sec

B - Boys
G - Girls

Chapter 5 - SOCIAL COMPETENCIES FOR THE YOUNG ADOLESCENT IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

by Glenn Poshard, Consultant
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The social milieu within which children and adults grow demands the acquisition of a number of skills—competencies—if one is to become a "successful" social human being. Although one begins to learn these skills almost from birth, proficiency in exercising them becomes increasingly important as the individual climbs the educational ladder and engages in a greater degree of social interaction. The junior high/middle school years typically represent a somewhat strained transition from childhood to young adulthood. Often this transition is complicated by a lack of understanding among students, teachers, and parents concerning those skills which are necessary for social competence at this particular age. After all, we all know the skills a mature adult is supposed to possess, and, really, we can only expect so much from a nine-year-old; but what about this extremely complicated young person who is neither child nor adult? What are some of the skills or competencies which we might expect the young adolescent to have as a social human being? How is he expected to obtain these skills? Are these skills applicable to all students or does one's socio-economic environment exempt some individuals while requiring others to maintain a certain level of competence? What differences exist in those social skills needed by early adolescent girls as opposed to those needed by early adolescent boys? These and many other questions surface as one attempts to identify the socially competent junior high/middle school student.

The mere compilation of a list of "acceptable skills" would prove meaningless in attempting to answer these questions. It is within a much larger philosophical framework we must begin to define social competency for the early adolescent. That framework which serves our children best in providing a meaningful way of becoming socially competent must necessarily incorporate the idea of democracy as a way of life, not just a social,

political, or economic form of government. It is especially important at the junior high/middle school level that children begin to learn democracy as a process in which they participate as equal, responsible human beings. It is not merely a philosophical idea learned in seventh or eighth grade American history or social studies, it is a way of behaving, of communicating, or of relating to other people in the classroom, in the home, and in the community. It is precisely the practice of those skills needed to live in a democratic society which helps to develop the socially competent young adolescent. If the practice of these skills is not allowed to progress, if it is stymied through autocratic or laissez faire teaching or parenting, the child may delay or fail to ever develop the necessary skills for social competency. It has been this writer's experience in working with the young adolescent that it is almost always within this age range that individuals are capable of meshing the cognitive understanding of democracy they have received from the textbook with the affective practice of democracy in which they have been allowed to engage. Freedom, order, responsibility, equality, and respect begin to take on much more than an abstract meaning when they are practiced as a way of life in the school, home, and community environments.

What social skills are needed, then, for the young adolescent to participate as a responsible and contributing member in a free democratic society?

Foremost among these skills is the ability of the individual to accept responsibility for himself and his actions. The junior high/middle school student should be allowed to participate in the formulation of reasonable rules to guide his conduct and contributions in the home, school, and community. The wise teacher or parent will not exclude the child from this type of decision-making but will make every effort to encourage his participation. It is understood, however, that when one is given the responsibility of helping to make the rules, one is also given the responsibility of helping to keep the rules. Too often these students are expected to

merely comply to arbitrary rules, decided upon in a very autocratic fashion, without ever having a chance to participate as a responsible person toward the making of those rules. We must encourage participation if we are to expect compliance. The junior high/middle school student should be progressing toward a greater sense of self-responsibility as the practice of democracy becomes a reality in the classroom.

The young adolescent should be gaining a greater sense of self-reliance and independence. He should be capable of using his own abilities and judgments to make decisions which directly affect his life. Constant encouragement of the child to achieve independence shows that we have faith in his ability to cope with and overcome adversities. To keep the child dependent upon adults by making all the decisions for him, to try to protect him against all the pain and discomforts of life, is to discourage him from gaining the kind of self-reliance he needs to become a productive member of a democratic society. The greater the degree of independence one achieves, the greater amount of freedom one enjoys—not freedom to do as one pleases, unrestricted and without limits. Freedom demands order and responsibility. The junior high/middle school student, naturally seeking to gain a measure of independence during the adolescent phase of his life, must be competent in recognizing the responsibilities he must assume in maintaining order if he is to enjoy the freedom he so often demands.

Self-acceptance is a social competency which plays a large role in the student's ability to develop meaningful relationships with other people. The young adolescent should be learning to accept his own strengths and weaknesses, recognizing that failures and shortcomings, as well as successes and praise, are part of life. Often, an outstanding contribution to the group is lost because of the inability of the student to risk his ideas or share his solution for fear of rejection. The socially competent student is a risk-taker, unafraid to hold himself or his idea up to peer scrutiny. While recognition is important, this student does not depend upon the praise of others to build his self-esteem but has learned to accept himself as a result of his own self-sufficiency. He has the courage

to be imperfect.[1] This student understands that "failure" indicates only a lack of skill and in no way affects his value as a person. He has the courage to make a mistake and fail without feeling lowered in his own self-esteem.

The young adolescent who is striving for social maturity should have a well-defined sense of integrity and loyalty.[2] The student should value honesty with himself as well as honesty with others. Facing up to problems which could easily be ignored is a difficult, but necessary, process, if the student is to become a socially competent individual. Peer-group pressure can be especially intense at this age level and the desire to belong so overwhelming that the student feels he must sacrifice his own values and beliefs to the group or be rejected. His own integrity demands one course of action while the group often demands another; this constant pull upon his emotions can sometimes result in a very traumatic experience. The student must be encouraged to weigh the demands carefully and make decisions which do not jeopardize his own individual sense of integrity.

Loyalty is a social competence which very few students lack at the junior high/middle school level. Almost all students at this grade level experience an intense loyalty to some group, whether it be a club, team, gang, or perhaps one of the many student organizations within the school. The socially competent student, however, should be able to distinguish between loyalty based upon logical and intelligent reasoning as opposed to blind, chauvinistic allegiance. His desire to belong is not so great as to overwhelm his sense of fairness and justice. He does not join merely for the sake of belonging but out of a sense of making a useful contribution toward some meaningful goal.

Self-discipline is one of the more difficult social skills for anyone to master, especially the young teenager who is just beginning to experience a greater degree of freedom than he has previously enjoyed. To attain an appreciable degree of social competency, however, it becomes an absolute necessity for the student to regulate his own will in regards to academic

as well as social functions in which he engages. The student must discipline himself to maintain appropriate study-time. Social etiquette demands a great deal of self-discipline in regards to proper dress and manners. Sexual mores dictate a certain amount of self-discipline in regards to dating and other social functions. The social skills needed for carrying on a variety of healthy interpersonal relationships across racial, sexual, cultural, and class lines should be stressed as a must for the socially competent junior high/middle school student.

Last, and certainly not least, among these competencies which we might expect the young adolescent to have as a social human being is the acceptance and care for others regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, religious affiliation (or lack of), or physical characteristics.[3] The value and appreciation of human life is perhaps the most important single skill we can teach our children and it is at the junior high/middle school level that this appreciation should manifest itself in leaps and bounds.

The prose-poem on the following page, perhaps, best expresses this writer's feeling toward the real goal of encouraging junior high/middle school students to become socially competent human beings. It was written for a class of ninth-grade students seven years ago at Thompsonville Junior High School, Thompsonville, Illinois.

Notes

[1]Rudolph Driekurs, Children the Challenge. New York: Hawthorne Books, Inc., 1964.

[2]Rodney Farmer, "Maslow and Values Education." Washington, D. C.: The Social Studies, vol. 69, no. 2, pp. 69-72.

[3]Ibid.

TO MY KIDS

You know I can't understand you today—
You're such idiots!
Why don't you understand that I trust you—
That I really care for you?
Why do you insist on betraying my trust?
Don't you know by now
That I am not a policeman?
I am a person, a human being, just like you—
And when you betray me— It hurts!
Do you know that the really important thing
Is not that you learn about
Caesar's Rome or Washington's leadership
But that you learn about you.
Why, when I leave you must you act as
Small children, quibbling over petty things,
Telling dirty jokes, throwing things?
When will you learn that the true test
Of being a real person, a mature being
Is how you carry yourself when you are alone,
Away from me and anyone else who represents authority?
It is easy to be the kind of people you are today.
It doesn't require any self-control
To heave a paper wad across the room when I'm gone.
It doesn't require any self-discipline
To spill out filthy words when you happen
To be alone as a class.
Okay! Okay! Be who you are or whoever it is
You're trying to be,
But you will not make a failure out of me;
I've made up my mind to love you more this spring
Than I did last fall.

- Glenn Poshard

Chapter 6 - MEETING THE CAREER DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF EARLY ADOLESCENTS

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Bulletin to all Junior High/Middle School Staff

> Next week all eighth grade students will take a vocational aptitude and interest test. This test is being given to students before they make their specific course selections for ninth grade or determine the program they wish to pursue during the next four years. Be sure each student is prepared with at least two no. 2 pencils. The test will be administered during third and fourth periods on Fri. the 13th.

Has a similar memo come across your desk recently? Are your students prepared to make career decisions with more than just two pencils? Have you related your courses to the knowledge and skills needed by anyone on a job? Do your students see the relationship between what they are learning in school and the tasks and responsibilities of workers such as truck drivers, farmers, doctors, teachers, writers, musicians, plumbers, etc.? What experiences will the typical student take to that test which is designed to identify his occupational interests and aptitudes? What competencies have you and your staff determined to be of vital importance for your students as they make their first crucial career decisions?

Competency-Based Graduation Requirements?

The State of Illinois does not at this time require competency-based graduation, but the Illinois State Board of Education is encouraging and assisting local education agencies to develop minimum competency testing programs. Other states, however, are developing standardized competency tests; some are requiring the meeting of those competencies prior to graduation.

For example, the Oregon Department of Standards and Graduation Requirements has decided that eighth-grade proficiency in reading, writing,

and arithmetic is adequate. Included as specific skills is the ability to write a letter, prepare a résumé, and follow a set of directions which are considered to be job-survival skills. In the area of career development, the guidelines state that:

> . . . to survive and advance in any career area, students are asked to develop: (a) entry level skills for their chosen career fields, (b) good work habits and attitudes, (c) the ability to maintain good interpersonal relationships, and (d) the ability to make appropriate career decisions.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals' Task Force on Graduation Requirements (1976) states that:

> Effective adult citizenship involves some degree of self-sufficiency. The diploma, therefore, should signify that the holder possessed the skills to acquire the information necessary to be a citizen and a worker. The graduate should be a person prepared to learn on his (or her) own, an educationally independent being possessing a set of basic competencies allowing for life to be pursued in an informed and productive manner. The Task Force also recommends that graduates be competent in the basic skills at a level sufficient to learn job specifications or to pursue the requirements to enter post-secondary education.[2]

A study was made at the University of Georgia to determine the opinion of administrators, teachers, parents, and students as to the possible change of the existing graduation requirements to minimal competency requirements.

> There was agreement among all respondents that learning the qualifications of a future career should be a diploma requirement (80% or high approval of all groups responding). An interesting divergence of opinion was revealed, however, when it was suggested that to graduate the student must have earned some money in a part-time or full-time job. Here 65% of the students and 72% of the parents agreed, while only 16% of the teachers and 12% of the administrators felt it necessary. Both students and parents would like to see a higher level of achievement in the basics. They would like more political awareness and more physical survival skills. Students and parents favor some practical job experience prior to graduation, and nearly half of them would agree to alternative ways to earn credits toward graduation, e.g.,

work in a hospital or health clinic, tutoring slow or disadvantage students, helping the elderly or poor, or participating in environmental improvement projects.[3]

It appears through the search of the literature that the competencies being identified as those which should be developed in the junior high/middle school should be in the basic academic skills areas and in career development rather than specific vocational skills. An examination of most home economics, industrial arts, and other vocational programs at the junior high/middle school will reveal that these programs are basically designed as career exploratory activities rather than for the development of specific vocational competencies. Of most importance is the provision of a relevant curriculum which develops the skills and knowledge needed in the world of work. This must be provided by all subject-matter teachers, counselors, and supportive-staff personnel in the schools, members of the working community, and the family.

Present Curriculum Requirements for the State of Illinois

It should be emphasized that in the Illinois State Board of Education Document Number 1, career education is a requirement in grades K-12.

a. The educational system shall provide every student with opportunities to prepare themselves for entry into the world of work.

b. Every district shall initiate a Career Awareness and Exploration Program which should enable students to make more meaningful and informed career decisions. This program should be available at all grade levels.[4]

Vocational education below the high school level is not a state requirement, but can be provided by the local educational agency. In the spring of 1976, Thomas A. Sinks conducted an Illinois Middle School Survey which identified the curriculum requirements and electives of 143 middle schools in Illinois (schools enrolling grades 4-9). Data were collected from 122 of the schools. Of these schools, 87 offered both home economics and industrial arts, 4 offered only home economics, 14 offered typing,

1 offered an occupational orientation class, 1 offered a business education class, and 1 offered a vocational agriculture class.[5]

Since the State of Illinois does require that career education be a part of every junior high/middle school curriculum, this paper will emphasize the career education competencies that should be identified for the 11- to 14-year-old student. However, each local education agency should determine, by staff consensus, the exact competencies and level of attainment to be met by each student in that district. The selected competencies should be developed through an infusion method whereby all staff members have the responsibility to include career development activities within their existing curricula.

Evolvement of Career Education

Historically, the two basic purposes of education have been: (1) preparation for living and (2) preparation for making a living. The first purpose has greatly overshadowed the second in that education has seemed to be preparing students for higher levels of education.[6]

The goals of public school education in the 19th century emphasized training of the mind, because it was assumed that, once trained, it would respond appropriately to every type of problem. Most vocational skills, attitudes, and knowledge were taught in the home and on the job, although private schools and colleges provided vocational skills for a few occupations.[7]

In the early 20th century, it became clear that changes were needed. Job content was changing rapidly and required a substantial investment in training. From 1917 to the mid 1930s, there was one principle of vocational education: meet the labor needs of local communities.[8]

The War Production Training programs of the early 1940s convinced some vocational educators that a far higher proportion of the population

could be prepared for useful work than they had ever felt possible and that the goals of vocational education should be expanded to include the development of skills of all students.[9] This led vocational educators to increase their objectives to three: (1) to meet labor and economic needs of the nation, (2) to increase the options available to the individual, and (3) to increase the intelligibility of both general and occupational education. The third objective came about as vocational educators noticed that many of their students increased rapidly in reading and computational skills after making a tentative career choice and learning something of the requirements for that career. Gains in comprehension of other school content courses often occurred as well. A typical student statement was, "For the first time, some of this school stuff makes sense." Usually this change in student awareness was not the result of planning on the part of the school. Educators determined that if relevance occurred frequently by accident, would it not occur much more frequently if that teacher encouraged it through planned activity? It is from that experience that career education resolved to go one step further and to ask all teachers to plan instruction so that its career implications became obvious.[10]

The vocational acts of 1963 and 1968 changed the charge to vocational educators from an emphasis on developing the skills needed to fit the labor market to a greater concern for the employability of people. In order to do this, a broader base was required which would include all classroom teachers, supportive staff, and the community.[11]

Into this atmosphere, the movement we now know as "CAREER EDUCATION" was born. This new concept is dependent upon the career development process and upon the teaching/learning process as a means of organizing its implementation efforts. An equally strong emphasis is placed on the need for expanding both the variety and nature of educational opportunities available to students.

The term "Career Education" was coined while Dr. Sidney Marland was Commissioner of Education in 1971. At that time, educators were looking

for the means to provide students with relevance between the studies in the classroom and the tasks performed in the working world and a means for helping students establish goals toward which they could work. This concept required a collaborative involvement of the entire formal educational system, the business-labor-industry-professional-government community, and the home and family structure. The definitions developed by Kenneth B. Hoyt, Director of the Office of Career Education, USOE, will assist educators in understanding the context in which this paper has been prepared.

> A CAREER is the totality of work one does in his/her lifetime. A VOCATION is one's primary work role at any given point in time which can be paid or unpaid. An OCCUPATION is one's primary work role in the world of paid employment. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION consists of all those activities and experiences through which one learns about a primary work role. CAREER EDUCATION consists of all those activities through which one learns about work. Career Education makes no restrictions in meaning whether one speaks about the work of the homemaker, the musician, the lawyer, or the bricklayer. Some work will require advanced college degrees, while other work may require no formal schooling of any kind.[12]

It is important to note at this time that all of the curricular offerings at the junior high/middle schools are basic elements of a student's career development. The vocational education courses should be considered both as awareness and exploratory programs which orient students to industrial, technical, business, service, and home and child care occupations. The junior high/middle school vocational education courses are rudimentary in nature and are not designed to develop entry-level job skills. The academic courses should also be considered as career awareness and exploration programs. For example, teachers may provide opportunities for students to relate science to a career as an engineer, language arts to becoming a writer, social studies to service as a state legislator, music to a career in the performing arts, and/or physical education to a career as a recreation leader, etc. By encouraging students to recognize their own abilities and interests in the curricular offerings as related to corresponding occupations, subject matter can become more relevant. Educational skills and knowledge needed for basic survival as an individual in

the society as we know it today can also be related to those skills and knowledge needed in the world of work. Career Education requires educators to broaden the scope of their curricular offerings, thereby expanding the vocational options for today's students.

Student Needs

Students in the junior high/middle school are in a transitional stage from childhood to young adulthood. They are looking for models of behavior, lifestyle, careers, and personhood. They are concerned about who they are "becoming." Some young people are very positive about their likes and dislikes, some are unsure, all need guidance as they think about, "Who am I? What do I want to do? What is best for me? How can I become who I think I want to be?" This is a time of questioning the relevance of school, the need for independence, and the drive for becoming adults. Therefore, this is a very important time in the career development of students. It is a time to provide opportunities to explore in-depth the working world they will soon enter and to provide opportunities for students to analyze themselves and set goals for the future.

According to Donald E. Super, father of the Career Development Theory, students in grades six to nine have been in the occupational fantasy stage (ages 4-10) where role-playing fantasy (the police officer, teacher, nurse) is a part of every day play. Most junior high/middle school students (ages 11-12) are in the interest stage where likes are the major determinates of aspirations and activities (ball player, pianist, writer, photographer). Some of the students are entering the capacity stage (ages 13-14) when abilities are given more weight and job requirements, including training, are considered. Movement from this stage will take the student into a period (ages 15-24) of self-examination, role tryout, and exploration of a specific occupation.[13]

The general process of vocational development during the adolescent years has also been described by Super in terms of the individual's being

faced with a vocational developmental task problem of crystallizing a tentative and generalized vocational preference. This task is mastered within the broader context of seeking an identity. As a result of occupational exploration, patterns begin to emerge in the form of alternative courses of action and differential consequences.[14] According to Hoyt, there are some students in the junior high/middle school for whom "career awareness" is a proper goal; others are ready for "career exploration"; and there is a significant number for whom basic beginnings of "career preparation" should be given priority consideration.[15]

Work values, formed during the elementary school years, are modifiable for most students in the junior high/middle school. It is eminently appropriate to expose such students to the multiple values of a work-oriented society as part of the normal self-discovery process of development. It is important for students to have the opportunity to participate in work experiences related to their tentative occupational choices. It is crucially important that middle/junior high school students see future possible educational alternatives available to them.[16] It is careers related to knowledge of self that form the basis for exploration at the junior high/middle school. The teaching of decision-making strategies, accompanied by actual experiences in decision-making, should be a major goal of career education.

According to Larry J. Bailey and Ronald W. Stadt:

> The crucial vocational point in the junior high school is when the student is confronted with the necessity of making a curriculum decision prior to entering high school. The intimate relationship between education and career, and the potential effects of this decision on later available options, suggest that choice of high school curriculum is in a very real sense as much a "career choice" as an educational one.[17]

As Martin Katz points out:

> When the adolescent is prompted by cultural expectations (especially the educational system) to think and act in terms of becoming which will progressively be subjected to reality testing, then the occupational choice process has been put into motion. The eighth and ninth grade curriculum decision is the first of these formal choice-points.[18]

An important problem of adolescents can be described as that of establishing an identity. In this process, the formulation of a career-objective plays a crucial role. "The chief agent in promoting this development is exploration which furnishes the adolescent with opportunities to make choices and independent decisions, to play different kinds of adult roles, and to establish his/her own identity."[19]

If career education can help students recognize the close relationships between education and occupations that exist now and will exist in the future and see work as a meaningful part of the total lifestyle of the individual; then, education has helped him to attain both of education's goals: preparation for making a good living and preparation for living.

Career Development Competencies

The emphasis of a career education program in the junior high/middle school should be on: (1) providing students with experiences in a wide variety of occupations, (2) reinforcing career-development concepts, and (3) accenting relationships between school educational experiences and the application of those experiences in the world of work. The activities should fuse the occupational information, career-development concepts, and subject-matter skills and concepts with relevant world-of-work activities.

Emphasis in the career-exploration program is on helping students learn: (1) how to gather information, (2) what questions to ask, (3) who to ask, (4) how to ask, and (5) where to find the answers to these questions. Such questions might be these:

> What people within the occupations can provide the kind of information I need?
>
> What agencies can supply me with occupational information?
>
> Where do I go to get the training I need to qualify for the vocation I choose?

Of what value is this course (English, math, social studies, etc.) to me when I leave school?

What courses on the high school level will be most helpful to me?

What do I want to become?

Can I get some experiences that will give me a realistic look at vocations in which I am interested?

What alternatives will I have in the world of work?

Conclusions

When making career choices, students not only need to be able to look at up-to-date information about salary, benefits, and training requirements but also at how an occupation can affect their lifestyle, the kinds of coping behaviors they need as workers, and also how they can continue their own self-development. As future employees and employers, today's students will have to be more adaptable than any other generation of workers. Their ability to relate knowledge of self to labor needs can increase their ability to make satisfactory career choices.

Of utmost importance to educators is their understanding that exploration activities should be designed to provide students with occupational information and experiences. The activities should be designed to give students an understanding of: what people do at work, where they work, and their work-survival skills; the knowledge and appreciation of what is entailed in job preparation, how to get a job and keep it; and an opportunity to assess their qualifications and interests in a variety of occupations.[19]

In view of the changeability of early adolescents, it is obvious that career studies should be exploratory. The home economics and industrial arts classes and other vocational education classes provide new experiences to explore work activities in the classroom. The academic courses can be designed to enhance greater relevance to skills needed in the work world.

Only a very few junior high/middle school students are ready to make a

career choice and follow it through to preparation and in-service maintenance. Therefore, an effective junior high/middle school career exploration program should begin where the students are and progress from that point. Providing alternative options for career decisions and relating school to work and one's leisure time will increase the student's probability of completing a high school education.

The importance of EXPERIENCING subject matter relevance cannot be overly stressed. Insisting that both sexes "try on" non-traditional as well as traditional vocational roles will help to reduce the stereotyped thinking of students. Role playing by students in both supervisory and support roles will broaden the concept of responsibilities of all workers in the occupational hierarchy.

Knowledge of self plus knowledge of careers can equal satisfactory career choice. In a time of rapidly changing technology and, hence, changing occupations, developing the ability to make a career plan based on relevant data collection, including ventures into the work world, is very significant for the junior high/middle school student.

It is the author's opinion that two basic career development competencies should be met at the junior high/middle school level. They are the development of: (1) the skills necessary to acquire and apply the occupational information necessary to be a worker and (2) the ability to make an appropriate career decision followed by a plan to accomplish that career goal. If students are to begin making meaningful vocational investigations, they must become more aware of the almost infinite number of possibilities that are open to them and of emerging fields in the future. The essential rationale underlying a career education program should be that to the degree students become aware of the world of work, understand the requirements for success in various occupations, and realize their own capabilities and possibilities, they will be able to make rational career choices which are most appropriate for them.[20]

Notes

[1]Fred Schab, "What Vocational Students Think About Minimum Competencies," American Vocational Journal, vol. 53, March 1978, pp. 61-62.

[2]National Association of Secondary School Principals, Competency Tests and Graduation Requirements. Reston, Va.: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1976, pp. 15-16.

[3]Schab, loc. cit.

[4]Illinois State Board of Education, The Illinois Program for Evaluation, Supervision, and Recognition of Schools. Springfield, Ill.: Illinois State Board of Education, Document No. 1, 1977, p. 15.

[5]Thomas A. Sinks, Illinois Middle School Survey, Spring 1975. Mankato, Minn.: Mankato State University, School of Education, n.d.

[6]Kenneth B. Hoyt et al., Career Education: What to Do and How to Do It. Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1972, p. 30.

[7]Ibid., p. 51.

[8]Ibid., p. 52.

[9]Ibid., pp. 52-53.

[10]Ibid., p. 53.

[11]Ibid., p. 54.

[12]Kenneth B. Hoyt, "Career Education, Vocational Education, and Occupational Education: An Approach to Defining Differences." Washington, D. C.: U. S. Office of Education, n.d.

[13]Donald E. Super et al., Vocational Development: A Framework for Research. Career Pattern Study, no. 1. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1957, pp. 40-41.

[14]Donald E. Super et al., Career Development: Self-Concept Theory. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1963, p. 81.

[15]Kenneth B. Hoyt, Career Education: Contributions to an Evolving Concept. Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1975, p. 296.

[16]Ibid., pp. 276-277.

[17]Larry J. Bailey and Ronald W. Stadt, Career Education: New Approaches to Human Development. Bloomington, Ill.: McKnight Publishing Company, 1973, p. 363.

[18]Martin Katz, Decisions and Values: A Rationale for Secondary School Guidance. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1963, p. 33.

[19]Jean Pierre Jordaan, "Exploratory Behavior: The Formation of Self and Occupational Concepts," Career Development: Self-Concept Theory. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1963, p. 47.

[20]Dorothy M. Lawson and Dorothea V. McDonald, "Career Exploration/ Occupational Information for the Junior High/Middle School. A Planning Curriculum Guide" (mimeographed). Charleston, Ill.: Eastern Illinois University, 1977.

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